

7. EDWARD III. 1327-1377

81. The war with Scotland.—After Edward II was deposed, a regency was appointed to govern the kingdom, as Edward III was only fourteen years old. Mortimer and Isabella, however, were the real rulers.

England had never acknowledged the independence of Scotland, and Bruce now invaded and plundered the northern counties to compel her to do so. Mortimer and Edward led an army against the Scots; but the latter had learned the folly of risking everything in a great battle, and were so rapid in their movements that the English could not come up with them. At last Mortimer and the queen concluded a peace by which the independence of Scotland was acknowledged.

This peace made Mortimer and the queen so unpopular that Edward, three years later, resolved to take over the government himself. Mortimer was arrested and condemned to death by Parliament as a traitor. The queen was imprisoned in her palace and allowed no further part in the government. Edward refused to keep Mortimer's treaty, and, again invading Scotland and defeating the Scottish king, David II, at Halidon Hill, placed Edward Balliol on the throne. David fled to France, but was soon restored to his kingdom by the Scots.

82. The Hundred Years' War begins.—In the meantime the relations between England and France were becoming more and more unfriendly. The English kings still held some possessions in France, of which Aquitaine was the chief. The king of France was overlord of these provinces, and for them, under the feudal law, the English kings had to do homage to him. The French king was determined to have complete control of all the provinces in any way subject to France. With the object of weakening the power of the English king, the French had formed an alliance with the Scots and had given them some help in their struggle for independence. Further, during this war the French had seized upon English vessels carrying wool to Flanders. Wool was